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# Russian Writers Puzzled By Red Ban on U.S. Visit

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Special to The Star

MOSCOW—Leading members of the Soviet Writers Union say they are still in the dark about the last minute decision to skip the International Pen Club meeting in New York this week.

Most disappointed were the six members of the delegation who had visas, tickets and were all set to take off when the red light flashed.

Four of them—Kasyn Kuliev, a writer from Nalchik in the Caucasus, Vladimir Machava-

riani; dean of the Foreign Languages Institute in Tbilisi, Georgia; Sergei Orlov, a poet from Leningrad; and Iohannes Semper, a writer from Tallinn, Estonia—had travelled to Moscow on what they thought was the first leg of the journey to New York.

The delegation included no well-known names.

One reason for the decision to cancel their trip may have been second thoughts that it was inappropriate for second raters to represent the Soviet Union at a gathering attended by many writers of world renown. And because it was too late to pick other delegates, it was better to send nobody than nobodies.

The official Soviet attitude toward the Pen Club meeting was deeply colored by reaction to the trial and sentencing of Andrei Siniavsky and Yuli Daniel last January for publishing anti-Soviet writings abroad under pseudonyms.

The authorities here resented

protests, especially that of the Pen Club's general secretary, David Carver, who came to Moscow last April.

Many prominent Soviet writers were doubtless reluctant to attend the current meeting, realizing they would be put on the spot by hostile questions about the affair which they could not fully answer in good conscience.

This probably accounts for the selection of such lackluster delegates whose names and impending departure for the United States were announced by Tass June 4.

Five days later Tass announced the cancellation.

This was probably the result of a top level political decision that under the circumstances the wisest course was to bypass the Pen Club meeting entirely, as the presence of any Soviet delegates would furnish a pretext for raking up the Siniavsky affair.